

AL
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COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE IN THE LAW OF NATIONS

1. There is, in law, no fundamental right of diplomatic or economic intercourse. Such intercourse admittedly is one of the characteristics of the position of states within the Family of Nations and maintenance of such intercourse may be considered a presupposition of the international personality of every state.

2. Since special rights of diplomatic or economic intercourse are not protected inso facto by the law of nations, states seek to secure such rights by conventional international law. The extension of recognition, instruments effecting the establishment of permanent diplomatic missions, treaties of friendship, commerce and navigation ("wood-and-water" treaties), and trade agreements usually are accomplished on a bilateral basis.

3. For the protection of more general interests and the promotion of a more uniform standard for the enjoyment of such interests, there are a large number of multilateral conventions, which have been opened for signature on a functional, regional, or more general basis. There are at least 25 general conventions now in force which deal with transit, transport, and communications. There are numerous conventions protecting such other economic interests as copyright, patents, improvement of the metric system, agriculture and preservation of animal life. There are conventions on the publication of tariff rates, the publication of international economic and commercial statistics. There are the judicial and scientific unions, humanitarian and educational conventions which have a direct bearing on economic questions. And, finally, there are over 70 international labor conventions.